

Media Release: January 9, 2004

c/o Amy Starchville, Project Director
201 Park Washington Court, Falls Church, VA 22046-4527
Astarchville@asmii.net 703-538-1799



Work Advances on The National EMS Scope of Practice Model

A task force convened by the National Association of State EMS Directors and the National Council of State EMS Training Coordinators met in Reston, Virginia, in early December to continue work on the National EMS Scope of Practice Model. This Model will be used to define national levels of EMS certification, to guide the development of National EMS Education Standards, and to assist state licensure bodies in defining the allowed range of skills and interventions for each EMS provider level. The Model is one of five components of the *National EMS Education Agenda for the Future: A Systems Approach*. The document is also intended to promote career mobility and public understanding of the functions of EMS providers.

The *EMS Education Agenda for the Future: A Systems Approach* proposes an education system with five primary components:

- National EMS Core Content
- National EMS Scope of Practice Model
- National EMS Education Standards
- National EMS Certification
- National EMS Program Accreditation

The National EMS Core Content developed under the auspices of the National Association of EMS Physicians (NAEMSP) and the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP), is nearly complete and defines the entire domain of EMS knowledge and skills.

The Scope of Practice Task Force is broadly representative of the EMS community and includes representation from groups including:

- National Association of State EMS Directors
- National Council of State EMS Training Coordinators
- International Association of Fire Fighters
- International Association of Fire Chiefs
- American Ambulance Association
- National Association of EMS Educators
- National Registry of EMTs
- American College of Surgeons
- American Academy of Pediatrics
- National Association of EMS Physicians
- American College of Emergency Physicians
- National Association of EMTs
- Committee on Accreditation of Educational Programs for the EMS Professions
- The Citizen Advocacy Center

At the December meeting, significant progress was made on the format and content of the draft. Some features of the document that are beginning to take focus include:

- The document will describe different levels of EMS providers.
- There will be a rationale statement about how and why the content of each level was selected.
- Where objective data is available, it is being used to guide the design of the levels.
- The format of the document will be similar to scopes of practice for other health care professions.

- There will likely be a new level of EMS practitioner who has capabilities beyond today's EMT-Paramedic.

The Task Force is very sensitive to many different factors including:

- If and how current EMS providers would transition to new provider levels;
- The unique needs of the current workforce including volunteers, paid providers, fire-based, private, non-transporting medical units, and others.

However, the patient and community needs are the overarching consideration, according to Dan Manz, Vermont State EMS Director and the Scope of Practice Model's Principal Investigator.

"While there has been excellent progress, some key decisions have not yet been made" said Manz. "For instance, the number of EMS provider levels has not been decided. It could be four or five. No names have been assigned to the provider levels. I am hopeful that when the initial draft is released, people will see that we have preserved the best features of our current EMS provider levels and improved them to do an even better job in the future."

Manz characterized the work of the task force as "slow and deliberate." "We had initially planned for this December meeting to result in a first draft of the scope of practice model document for national review. It is now clear that we are some months away from that goal. The group is committed to delivering a quality draft that will be useful in elevating the national dialogue on this subject. We are breaking new ground in terms of how EMS providers describe their profession to the public and how future licensure levels are established. We are gathering and analyzing additional data to get this right rather than rush the product."

The next SOP task force meeting is scheduled for May 2004. Once available, the draft will be widely circulated for comments. After consideration of the comments, adjustments will be made and there will be a national review process to help with finalizing the document. (Additional information may be obtained at www.emsscopeofpractice.org.)

The National EMS Scope of Practice Model project is supported jointly by National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and Health Resource and Services Administration (Emergency Medical Services for Children).

For additional information, contact:

Dan Manz, Principal Investigator
dmanz@vdh.state.vt.us
 802-863-7263

Amy Starchville, Project Director
astarchville@asmii.net
 703-538-1799